

Dragnet 1k80

Only the names have been changed to protect the innocent

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Dragnet

Dragnet was perhaps the most famous and influential police procedural drama in media history. The series gave millions of audience members a feel for the boredom and drudgery, as well as the danger and heroism, of real-life police work. Dragnet earned praise for improving the public opinion of police officers.

Actor and producer Jack Webb's aims in Dragnet were for realism and unpretentious acting. He achieved both goals, and Dragnet remains a key influence on subsequent police dramas in many media.

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D.H.Q. - Night School

1970

Joe signs up for a night class in "sensitivity," where people "let their hair down" (Joe's hair, of course, is too short to have anywhere to go), such as by talking about how people have the right to take drugs if they want to, since they do not harm anyone else. No one knows that Joe is a police officer, and when he sees a packet of marijuana in a classmate's notebook, he arrests him after class.

Information:

Air date: March 19, 1970

Written by: Dick Morgan

Cast:

Leonard Stone as Prof. Grant

Harry Bartell as Carl

J.C. Curtiss as Jerry Morgan

Shannon Farnon as Barbara

Sidney Clute as Norm Cavanaugh

Robert Clarke as Bob

Tim Donnelly as Jack

Marion Charles as Kelly

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The Interrogation

1967

An undercover cop with the narcotics Division, who's only been on the force for 114 days, is accused of robbing a liquor store on Sunset Strip. The entire episode centers around the IAD interview by Joe and Bill. The officer in question keeps tripping up on different times and locations, and has a hard time understanding why his story is not believed. In the end, someone who looks just like the cop is arrested after knocking off another liquor store.

Information:

Air date: February 9, 1967

Written by: Preston Wood

Cast: Kent McCord as Officer Paul Culver

The Kidnapping

1967

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Friday and Gannon are called to a bank because a young retail cosmetics executive (Peggy Webber) is trying to withdraw \$75,000 to ransom her boss, who's being held hostage by a young gunman. She brings the money back to the house and the kidnapper flees with the hostage in the trunk. Friday stages a fake breakdown on a freeway on-ramp, trapping the bad guy.

Information:

Air date: January 26, 1967

Written by: Preston Wood

Cast:

Peggy Webber as Janet Ohrmund

Harry Bartell as Ray Righetti

Art Balinger as Capt. Hugh Brown

Ronnie Rondell as Donald Joseph Albers

The Bank Examiner Swindle

1967

Friday and Gannon go after two slick con men swindling elderly people out of money by gulling them into withdrawing funds from their bank accounts "to catch an embezzler." The con men are so slick they tell their victims that policemen will come to return their money! Some of the victims are really pitiful, including a man in his 80s (Burt Mustin) who was conned out of his burial funds, and a retired bit actress (Harriet MacGibbon, familiar to viewers as Mr. Drysdale's wife on "Beverly Hillbillies").

Information:

Air date: February 23, 1967

Howard Culver as Frank Thomas

Nydia Westman as Mrs. Mary Burnside

Burt Mustin as Fred Gregory

Harriet MacGibbon as Flo-Belle Mirada

Lillian Powell as Mrs. Pauline Gray

Robert Knapp as Captain Lambert

Donald Berry as James Fremont

Bert Holland as Croft

Don Ross as Cameraman

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Dragnet on Television

When television was interested in Dragnet, Webb bucked the prevailing wisdom which argued that radio staff could not adapt to the new medium. He insisted on hiring radio staff (from actors to writers and production staff) as much as was feasible to work on the television version. This loyalty would endear Webb to many of his Dragnet colleagues for decades to come.

[Read more](#)

Dragnet on the Radio

Dragnet debuted inauspiciously. The first several months were bumpy, as Webb and company worked out the program's format and eventually became comfortable with their characters (Friday was originally portrayed as more brash and forceful than his later usually relaxed demeanor). Gradually, Friday's deadpan, fast-talking persona emerged, described by John Dunning as "a cop's cop, tough but not hard, conservative but caring." (Dunning, 210) Friday's first partner was Sgt. Ben Romero, portrayed by Barton Yarborough, a longtime radio actor.

[Read more](#)

Welcome

Dragnet's call sign



